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Time travel
Gull Lake in 1914 on page 5

Merry mothers
Celebrating Mother's Day on page 7

Love your library
Calling all book lovers on page 12

Ducks have returned to the Haliburton Highlands waterways. /submitted by Tammy Nash

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SOPHIA: *Survivor*

KONNICHIWA! I'M Sophia. You might have seen me in a shampoo commercial. Funny thing is, I once lost almost all my hair while I got treatments for leukemia. I was four, but medicines fixed me, and I'm now a survivor! I'm proud of that, and because I already have an actual job, lol. I help choose my ad outfits, and stylists do the rest. I get to keep some clothes. My closet's full of awesome combinations, especially for dress-up!

My parents are proud of me too. I'm already doing great in Grade 5. Not all teachers are amazing, but this one's quite interesting, and the kids appreciate that she never raises her voice, even to the brattiest. Maybe talking softly is better than shouting orders. I get enough of that in modelling!

DEB REED
Wind in the Attic

My mother's wrapping up another job right now in Tokyo. She gets short-term contracts, kind of like I do, but I sure can't do project management in international banking. I don't enjoy all math, and especially not 'data analysis' and 'financial literacy'. Give me straight-up multiplication and division. I've known my number facts since I was five. We actually practiced them in the hospital. I memorized a song and I begged my mum to play me over and over. Every times table used different animal voices. My favourites were the chickens squawking *one times six is six, two times six is twelve, three times six is…"*, and so on.

My Mum's Tokyo contract is only for four months, and she uses mostly English there, but she still wants me to learn Japanese since both her grandparents were from Osaka. They ran a famous restaurant, and we still eat out once a month to remember that. My favourite Japanese dish is tempura, but I also love yakitori, gyoza and ramen. I'll eat salmon sushi, but not the hot green wasabi you're supposed to add. I prefer the spices in Dad's Conch Fritters. His grandparents were Bahamian. Fresh ingredients can be expensive up here, so we buy those in the city.

I'm going to another modelling gig in Toronto next week, so we'll pick up some conch meat then. We buy it frozen so it lasts the three-hour drive back to our lake house. Mum's also flying home for ten days, so we'll do everything in one weekend: pick her up at the airport, go to a Caribbean market, and do another photoshoot. I'm not a fan of makeup at my age, but I usually have to wear a little face powder because of studio lighting. I do like getting salon nail gels once in a while just for fun.

I want to be a model, teacher or archaeologist. I hope to visit faraway museums, galleries, and different cultures. Ever since Dad read me *Pinocchio*, I've wanted to visit Italy. And Transylvania! I was Dracula for my first two Halloweens, so I dream about actually seeing that creepy real-life castle in Romania!

That's my story. For real! Over and out.

Author's note: Here's the latest in our alphabetical series, Dickens-style, introducing a fictional Central Ontario classroom which recognizes student individuality, diversity, similarity, and wide-open growing on the verge of their futures. It's also our effort to help celebrate devoted teachers everywhere. We invite all ages, but especially kids, to enjoy reading these chapters out loud. ***ROOM 10*** *will soon be available in picture book format. A similar series will follow this one. Stay tuned!*

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Shoppers Drug Mart Haliburton *

Todd's Independent *

All inserts are to selected distribution areas.

For information on how your flyer can be inserted each week in County Life please contact Melissa Armstrong at **613-332-2002** or **melissa@haliburtonpress.com**

Hide and seek

IT HAS often been said that turkey hunting is a game of hide and seek. The hunter hides and calls and the turkey will then seek out the source of the call, which is its undoing.

I agree with the hide and seek analogy but view it a bit differently.

I believe the turkey hides on properties the hunter has no access to, and the hunter then tries to seek permission to hunt there.

How to successfully gain permission to hunt a property is one of the greatest and least discussed skills in turkey hunting.

STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

Frankly, hunters have a lot going against them.

For example, once you've made your pitch, the property owner usually summarizes it with, "So what you are telling me is that you want to park on my property well before sunrise, step out of your vehicle, walk deep into the darkness in full camouflage, while carrying a shotgun, shells, a pack, at least one rubber replica of a turkey and several calls.

Then you want to sit on the cold, hard, damp ground with your back to a tree and stay perfectly still as the sun rises and the mosquitoes, ticks, and/or black flies decide to feast on you, moving only occasionally to make turkey noises with expensive calls that you bought? All for the chance of attracting a wild turkey, so you can shoot one, but only if it has a beard?"

That's when you nod and say, "Yes."

They then typically reply with, "Are you sure you're OK?"

You then assure the landowner you are.

If you are lucky, they will say yes, but only because their flock of birds have taken to roosting on branches directly over their cars. Otherwise, it's onto the next property.

While there is no right way to do this, there are things you should avoid.

First, don't show up at the landowner's door in full camouflage with a necklace of turkey spurs around your neck or a fan of tail feathers in your cap. It only reinforces his or her thoughts that you are not quite "right."

Another mistake often committed by the average turkey hunter is bringing along your favourite turkey decoy and introducing it to the landowner immediately. Keep "Esmerelda" in the front seat of the vehicle, where she belongs, until the opportunity to introduce her presents itself. I know it's hard to believe, but some people do not immediately hit it off with rubber hen turkey decoys. I suspect this is because they are more of the duck and goose decoy types.

Lastly, and for the love of all things holy, do not think even for a moment that you can seal the deal by serenading the land owner with five to ten minutes of turkey calling, no matter how good you are at clucking, purring, gobbling, or yelping. In my 30-something years of turkey hunting, this has only worked once, and later I discovered it was because the man was learning the clarinet and wanted his wife to hear that there were worse noises out there.

In the best-case scenario, if you play your cards right, you will be awarded the privilege of hunting on a private property where birds abounded until the day before.

This, as I said, is one of the most important skills required to be a successful turkey hunter. If you don't believe me, next time we meet, come to the front seat of my vehicle, and ask Esmerelda.

Legion Events

Branch 441 Kinmount

Monday: Bid Euchre 1 p.m., Card night 7 p.m.
Wednesday: Mixed Darts, 7:30 p.m.
Friday: Bingo- Doors open at 5 p.m., play at 6:45 p.m.
Saturday: Clubroom opens at 3 p.m. Meat draw 5 p.m.
2nd Sunday of the month
Ladies Auxiliary - 11 a.m.
3rd Thursday of the month 7 p.m. executive meeting.7:30 p.m. general meeting (members only)
Last Sunday of the month - All you can eat breakfast
Hall rentals available at reasonable prices. Email: 441RCL@gmail.com Call 705-488-3462 or 705-928-7105. We welcome everyone to our events and we look forward to seeing you!

Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Bridge 1 p.m. Schofield Rm. Youth darts 6:30 to 8 p.m. Clubroom 10 to 18 years of age. All are welcome, no experience necessary
Tuesdays: League darts 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid Euchre 1 p.m. start – Main Hall. Bingo
doors open at 6 p.m. Bingo 7 p.m.
FirstWed of each month with jackpot.
Follow Facebook.com/Branch129 Bingo for the most up-to-date information
Thursdays: General Meeting third Thursday of the month, 6:30 p.m. All members urged to attend.
Ladies Auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
Fridays: Five meat draw, five prizes each draw, first draw 4:30 p.m., last draw 6:30 p.m. Tickets $2 per draw. Paul Sisson, MC. Friday fun darts from 4:30 p.m. and onwards. 50/50 Draw 5:40 p.m.
Planning a function for 10 or 200, call Cheryl Waller at 905-447-7741, email haliburtonlegionrentals@gmail.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com. Everyone is welcome! Club room hours: Mon. 3 to 6 p.m., Tues. 3 to 9 p.m., Wed/Thurs. 3 to 6 p.m. Fri. 3 to 7 p.m.

Branch 636 Minden

Lunch - Monday to Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week. Bid Euchre 1 to 3 p.m.
Tuesday: Food 5 p.m. Canoe FM Bingo 6 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1 to 3 p.m., Darts 7 to 9 p.m. and Euchre 7 to 9 p.m.
Every other Friday: Karaoke 8 to 11 p.m.
Friday Fish & Chips, Wings. Lunch 11a.m. to 2 p.m. and Dinner 4 to 7 p.m.
Saturday All Day Breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with three Meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541.
Schedules are subject to change without notice. Check our Facebook page Minden Legion Branch 636

Branch 624 Wilberforce

Monday: Open 7 to 10 p.m. May 11, 18, 25 Darts $5/player 7 p.m.
Tuesday: Special Events Only - May 12, 19, 26 Veteran's and Seniors Exercise Club 1 p.m.
Wednesday: Open 2 to 10 p.m.
May 13, 20, 27 Darts $5/player 2 p.m.
Quick Supper Menu changes weekly $10. 5 to 6:30 p.m. Open Cribbage 6:30 p.m. – No need to pre-register
Thursday: Open 2 to 6 p.m. - May 14, 28 HHHS Social Rec 10 a.m.
Friday: Open 2 to 11 p.m. -
May 15, 29 Fish & Chips 1pc/$15, 2pc/$20. 5 to 8 p.m.
8, 22 Wings and Jam Session $15/lb. 5 to 8 p.m.
8, 22 Community Care 55+ Lunch $20. 12 p.m.
Saturday: Open 2 to 7 p.m. - May 16 Lou Moody Fishing Derby. Weigh in 3 to 5 p.m.,
16 Karaoke 8 p.m. to 12 a.m.,
23 Honours and Awards 11 a.m.
30 Nacho Average Trivia. Registration is at 6:30 p.m. Game Begins at 7pm Sharp. $5/Player
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Coming through winter like champs, don'tcha know

DEAR READER,

This is the time of year when ol' Maybelle doesn't want to make plans too early because the next day the sun may come out and, after a full week of rain, I just want to drop everything and go outside and play. Yes PLAY. Gotta keep my Inner Child happy, don'tcha know. Like splashing in puddles with your rain-boots on, and now, feeling the sun warm your cheeks and hands, hear the birds singing, and see perennials poking their heads through the earth, alive as can be, after a long lonnnnng winter's sleep. It's like panning for gold. You don't want to miss any of it.

MAYBELLE'S
Fireside Stories

So, what did ol' Maybelle do? Why, I called my friends together to sit outside on my front porch and share what we were all up to this winter. Of course we saw each other during that time, but none of us are spring chickens, except for Vilma Yuccch and her sweetheart, Officer Stanley Penelope McBottom, don'tcha know, so our visits were far less than they will be now that the snow and ice are gone. This year, winter just didn't take a hint. It outstayed its welcome regardless of all of us barking about it in Lake WhaddayathinkImean.

And, there we were: Vilma, Officer McB, Sybil Beaucannon Hughes, Twindle Mumbly, Beanpole Starkman, and Bogart (my pet bear), of course – like cavemen (and gals) embracing a much-needed reunion after six months of communicating by phone and email, mostly, without up-close and personal lip flapping.

So, you can imagine how surprised I was when I saw Beanpole after all this time. Not the way he announced himself. He did that in his usual manner, landing his two-seater Tiger Moth biplane in (what will be) my cabbage patch and then crashing head-on into my woodpile, don'tcha know. It was his FACE that surprised me. To be more specific, Beanpole had grown a waist-length snow white beard!

You see, Beanpole's beard grew so aggressively, why that poor man had to shave three times a day, don'tcha know. Oftentimes, he'd show up with Band-aids plastered all over his cheeks and neck from razor damage, don'tcha know. Now, here he was looking like Father Time. All that was missing was the scythe.

In addition to his new "look", he showed us what else he was up to this winter. He grabbed the wool beanie off his head and held it out for us to see. It was beautiful. Red and white with a maple leaf in the center and a bushy tassel hanging off the side. "I knitted it!" he said proudly. "I figured, if Tom Daley, Ryan Gosling and Russell Crowe can knit, so can I!"

We truly were impressed and gave him a good five minutes of praise-time.

As you may already know, for many years now, Vilma has been making and selling tie-dyed t-shirts with detachable sleeves, so you can wear them all-year round, don'tcha know. Well, over the winter, Vilma experimented using dye on herself. Well, sort of. She learned the art of tattooing (on YouTube) and used herself and her sweetheart, McB, as test models. Why if they didn't walk in here with matching hearts on the palms of their hands, don'tcha know. Kinda romantic when you think about it. He was holding her heart in his hand and vicey versa, don'tcha know.

Then there's Twindle Mumbly, one of my oldest, dearest friends, and as you know, the owner of Lake WhaddayathinkImean Taxidermy and Haberdashery. He arrived with something that wasn't stuffed, and I don't mean like grape leaves or cabbage. He came with a puppy. TWINDLE, who used to show up with some stuffed roadkill that he dressed like the King of Scotland, or rock celeb, don'tcha know. But, now, here he was with Willie, the cutest sweetest six-week-old beagle who was jumping and licking and loving his master to bits.

That made us all very happy. Even Bogart liked him and picked him up in his big paws and licked him like a pot of honey. Well, at first Twindle nearly went faint, but when he saw Willie return the affection by peeing in his hand, he relaxed while the rest of us had a good laugh, don'tcha know.

Sybil Beaucannon Hughes was there, as well, and not alone which was her wont. She arrived with three young burly men from the Lake WhaddayathinkImean Firemen's Calendar. The only thing I was sorry about was not having enough chips and guacamole to go around. These guys had a huge appetite. Almost as big as Sybil's, (wink wink).

Of course, Officer McB came up with a new invention over the winter. Being a technology wiz, he focused on AI and created an AI dating app. That's right. It's for humans who want to meet AI generated DIGITAL Humans. That's a whole other story for another time.

And then there's ol' Maybelle. What did I do over the winter? I wrote. And I read. And I even made some art. EDIBLE art. Necklaces and bracelets made from pretzels, macaroni, kidney beans, dried sardines and stale Doritos. Jewellery with a crunch, I call it. I figure, why not wear beautiful jewellery that you can eat in case the economy goes south.

So, we made it through the winter and here we are outside again like nature's lovely perennials full of life and will and patience, along with the robins and chickadees who send bird coded songs to each other from tree to tree. And ol' Maybelle is sending an UNcoded message to you, Dear Reader: *We made it through this seemingly endless winter. We'll always make it through. And now that we're here … enjoy, enjoy, enjoy!*

***Maybelle's Fireside Stories** is written by Jerelyn Craden. "Maybelle's Cure for What Ails You," 21 of Maybelle's best short stories and her novel: "Vessie Flamingo Outshining the Moon" are now available at www.amazon.com.*

Haliburton HIGHLANDS Seniors Active Living Centre

Check out this month's SALC events and activities for residents aged 55+

Board game drop-in
various dates in May
Senior Balance Fitness Class
May 8, 15, 22, 29
Needle Felting: Butterflies
May 13, 14, 21, 29
Painting Class - May 21
Qi Gong for Seniors - May 11, 25
Seniors Stretch Class
May 12,19,26
Seniors Cardio & Balance Fitness Class - May 12, 19, 26
Exercise Classes with Georgia
May 12, 19, 26
Genealogy for Seniors
May 7, 15, 20, 26
Chair Yoga with Lorrie - May 6 & 20
Yarners Social - May 13, 20, 27
Breathwork Class - May 7, 14, 21, 28
Tech Help Walk-In Clinic
May 8, 12, 15, 21
Coffee House with Heart & Soul - May 9
Happy Mother's Day Pina Colada Social - May 10
Webinar - Victorian Tea Etiquette w/ Minden Hills Cultural Centre
May 11
Seniors Line Dancing
May 12 & 26
Spring Wildflower & Wild Leek Walk - May 14
Chair Yoga with Ardith - May 14 & 28
Demystify AI - May 19 & 26
Poetry with Patricia - May 21
Cribbage Friday - May 22
Webinar: Vulnerable Road Users w/ Ministry of Transportation - May 25

For full details, visit HaliburtonCounty.ca/SALC or pick up a calendar at a municipal office, library or Legion near you!

Haliburton County Seniors Active Living Centre (SALC)
Through this program, older adults (55+) and seniors (65+) are invited to get active, make friends, and be well!
The SALC Program is designed to provide social, cultural, learning, and recreational opportunities for seniors to stay fit, healthy and socially connected in their communities.
SALC Programming is available in Haliburton County through collaboration between the County of Haliburton and local municipalities, the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility, and multiple partners.

Funding for this program has been provided by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.
Ontario

Find a purple sky moment

LAST NIGHT as I was leaving a meeting, I looked to the western sky and it was purple. A deep purple with stars just popping out of the sky. I took a few seconds to really see it and took a deep breath. Then I jumped in the car and drove home.

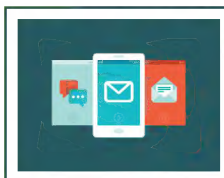
TERESA JORDAN
Community Living Contemplations

I think sometimes we get caught up in the idea that we all need a studio with some kind of singing bowl and yoga mat with a playlist of relaxation reels at the ready to call ourselves mindful. In these times of great challenge and ever-changing news stories that cause anxiety, there is not much time to build or relax in the zen den of our imagination.

If our busy lives are made up of moments, I think that switching out the odd moment to really notice what is going on around will have a cumulative effect. Right in the moment of the purple sky, I could focus, get clear, breathe deep. All the worries were still there, but I was free for a moment.

Find a purple sky moment. Drink in a moment of clarity, quiet, safety. Just ease into that for a few precious seconds before you have to get back to the grind. Maybe it will not change everything in a minute, but I am confident that there is a cumulative effect to taking these moments when you can; a regulation that helps you to see clearly in the next step of the ongoing and almost chronic problem solving and navigation that fills up our lives from the edges.

The sky was purple with dots of stars and when you notice it, in the moment, all is well.



Have a thought, comment or opinion you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to
emily@haliburtonpress.com

Glimpses of the past

RUSS WUNKER
Glimpses of the Past

GULL LAKE – c. 1914

This Real Photo Post Card was produced by *Photo Specialty Co. Limited, Streetsville, ON.* around 1914. The post mark is from Boskung on August 14, 1915. This company made scores of post cards of towns and other locations across Ontario in the early twentieth century.

The card title simply says "Gull Lake, Minden Ont.", and the correspondent, who gives Boskung P.O. as a return address, reports that "this is a local scene". The card was mailed to Rochester, and carries two one cent stamps.

The image appears to depict a portion of the western shore, at the point where Rackety Creek flows in to Gull Lake. It was likely taken in the late summer or early fall, as there is still full foliage on the trees, but the water level has dropped.

Looking closely, you can see the current of Rackety Creek pushing out into the lake. In the background, a building is evident. It is likely the first summer cottage of the Beddlington family.

Note that many tree stumps and other debris litter the shore line. This reflects the years of logging that took place. Timber drives came down Rackety Creek through the log shute at Bob Lake, as well as through Gull Lake itself. The many stumps visible are the remains of trees that were inundated when the level of Gull Lake was raised by the construction of timber dams at Moore Falls.

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Send your letters to the editor to emily@haliburtonpress.com. Letters must be signed and include a phone number.

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That first warm day of spring

I WISH every day were like that first warm day of spring.

It's different. We all know it. Lighter, freer, open, bright. On that first warm day of spring, moods are lifted; the tension pulling our bodies from months of bundling, sliced away like a ripened plum.

There's a change in the air. A sweetness that carries in warmth, a softness that curls around our bones.

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Editor

The word 'hope' has such an arching umbrella of definitions. It's wide and spanning and difficult to grasp. We all know it, have all felt it, but how do we define it?

I believe it can be seen, on that first warm day of spring.

I sat on a bench last week, as the season began to unfurl. It was a rare moment of solitude for me. A few minutes, precious seconds, before I needed to be elsewhere, don a different hat.

But the world hummed around me. Windows down, songs I couldn't place on the radio, their beats thrumming the downtown core. Sandals on pale feet, buttoned blouses rolled up to the elbows. Smells of grilling meats and the rattle of an iced coffee.

And while faces were covered with wire rimmed sunglasses, their faces turned to the sun.

After months of shuffling and sliding, suddenly we look skyward, rays melting taut edges, hardened from wintering.

We're not so different after all, I thought to myself. We're all just flowers that turn to the light, our necks craning for warmth. The joy that is sourced on that first warm day of spring is universal. Felt by plants and animals, children and adults.

While we navigate wars and wondering, headlines and hurt, the shared experience of being human courses through our veins. We dance, we laugh, we cry, we mourn. We turn our heads down from the cold, up to the sun.

Why can't every day be exactly like today, I thought, on that first warm day of spring.

But then I realized, if every day were exactly like today, the warmth wouldn't feel the same. It would feel steady, sizzling. A layer of skin, rug burnt and rubbed raw.

We would not carry on with the same spring in our steps; the novelty of newness wearing down like an overly thumbed coin. Hope would be replaced with monotony, the colours and dashes of joy hardened by the black and white edges of routine.

We need fresh starts, new beginnings. We need changes, evolution, time. We are creatures who thumb our way through the seasons, each one bringing the turn of a page.

The darkness of winter that seeps into our bones cultivates a promise of spring on the horizon, dappled with pink dashes and streaks; the pendulum swings and brings another day. We need low so we have high, rain so we have growth, dark so we have light, hurt so we have heart.

And when that first warm day of spring does elbow its way through the cracks and crevices of an overly hardened winter, we turn to the light.

And we choose to believe again, even for a moment. In goodness and promise, in hope and tomorrows. Kindness bobs its way closer to the surface, joy marinating in our warming hearts and minds.

So while this may not be every day, we can appreciate it for what it is. Right here, right now. Fleeting and blurry, fuzzy and soft.

That first warm day of spring.

Top 10 alternate reasons why woodpeckers peck trees

WOODPECKERS ARE a fascinating bird, mostly because of their iconic behaviour of pecking at trees. Even the most amateurish naturalist knows that they do this to find food under the bark of the trees they are pecking at. But fewer people know they do it for other less practical reasons too. Here are the top 10.

STEVE GALEA
Humour Columnist

1. To appear "loco," so the rest of the bird world doesn't mess with them.
2. Need to do something with all that pent up frustration.
3. Living with the mistaken belief that if they knock on the right tree, a doors will open.
4. No matter how hard they try, they can only remember the first part of a knock-knock joke.
5. Tried rocks. Not fun.
6. Now that they have that reputation it's kind of hard to stop.
7. Want to mock the helmet wearing crowd.
8. Practicing morse code.
9. Have you tried flying around with a jackhammer?
10. If you took the wood part out of the equation, they would just be known as peckers.

Sharing

Saplings springing from the earth,
sharing space and Air with their elders that tower over them,
leaving room for the saplings to stretch and grow,
the bones of limbless, leafless trees, their trunks, hard as stone,
surrounding them too, the forest housing them all,
generations of trees, from seedlings to the stump on which I rest,
in this patch of forest on the fringe of the trail, inhaling Air scoured by days of Rain,
surrounded by the remains of trees whose roots still cling to crumbs of earth beneath the ground,
the pine saplings, whose needles are so soft and green, my fingers linger in their branches, wishing them a long Life,
as I squint up at slants of sunlight sliding down through the spaces between the pines,
straightening my spine as I slouch on the stump,
slumping my shoulders like the boulder that bulges from the forest floor,
moss crawling along its flanks, resting my eyes in the plushness of the green, a balm for their morning bleariness,
my eyes still awakening, drinking in the different shades of the pine and fir saplings,
tendrils curling from the earth, my ears listening to the cawing of invisible crows,
drowning the chirps of smaller birds finding refuge in the forest too, feeling the dampness of the moss cap cloaking
the stump where I sit, wondering what kind of tree it was before its limbs and branches withered,
trees in varying stages of growth and decay sharing this patch of forest, a pine sapling growing alongside the hollowed relic of a tree, its insides rotted, yet still it remains here among the others,
sprigs of green springing from the ground beside it, peeking through the debris of dead leaves,
new Life insinuating itself, yearning to breathe and grow, my forest Breath slower and deeper
than when I am scurrying along a sidewalk or street, my eyes glancing away as soon as they meet a stranger's,
yet here, sitting in the stillness among the trees, my eyes don't look away as they gaze into the green of moss
or a sapling's newborn needles, or up at the tall tall pines towering over me, the forest never feels crowded
though its trees grow so close together, marveling that they never feel squished or cramped,
enough room for all the trees, young and old, to breathe, letting me share Air and space with them on this morning
when I seek reprieve from concrete and streets, feeling the earth beneath my feet, as I veer off the trail,
letting the saplings lead me toward this spot where I find the stump, slumping onto it with relief,
letting my Breath breathe and my Heart beat, the forest seizing my worries from me and holding them
'till it's time for me to rise from the stump and leave,
the trees never asking if I'd like my worries back,
they just keep them for me, letting me go, feeling replenished and calm, the bursts of green, a balm for my eyes,
seeping deeper into the black space behind them,
like droplets of Rain melting into the earth,
drenching the roots of trees that are just beginning,
and those that have been growing for years,
sharing the forest that shelters them all from the world that sprawls beyond it,
I ruffle a pine sapling's head, slap the trunk of a stooped tree, So Long, stretching my spine, tall as the pines,
my steps and Breath feeling lighter than before I came, grateful to the trees for letting me share my burdens with them,
while they stand in silence and listen, breathing and growing alongside one another their entire lives,
surviving and thriving through the seasons, without worry or complaint, their branches reaching up toward Sky day and Night,
shrouding them in darkness then drenching them with Rivers of light.

Sylvie Kalenda

Writing on the Senior Side

Mother's Day

MOTHER'S DAY changes with time and life, but what remains the same is connection and love. I wish all mothers a lovely day, regardless of when you make that connection, whatever day it may happen.

***

I am a daughter

It is Saturday, the day before Mother's Day. I walked to the corner store. Old Man Potter put flowers out for this special occasion. I purchased my yearly gift, and the single geranium is crimson red and standing strong. I will take it home and hide it until tomorrow. I made a card at school, and it is pretty with flowers: something that resembles a daisy and a few tulips, because everyone can draw tulips, and I am not an artist. I know my mom will love it. She is our beautiful red geranium, standing strong, supporting her family as a salesclerk at Simpson's. She is the bright red bloom in her red and white kitchen.

Here is an excerpt about my mom from my book, *21 Smithfield Drive*. It is part of a story called *The Red and White Kitchen.*

It's my job to do the dishes. No one likes doing dishes, but what makes it special is that Mom and I usually do them together. Mom tells me her stories and sings her songs, and we laugh as two sisters might. She sings me the songs of her childhood. She was brought up in the Church of England, so she sings songs I never heard at Catholic school, and she messes with them. *Onward Christian Soldiers marching off to war* becomes *Onward Christian bedbugs creeping down the sheet. When you reach the bottom, please don't tickle my feet.* We giggle. *School days, school days, dear old golden rule days* become *School days, school days, poker, crap and pool days.* We giggle. I sing her some of my Catholic songs, and we sing together. We sing her songs from the '40s and early '50s, especially those sung by Perry Como and Dean Martin. She teases that Perry Como is her boyfriend.

When the dishes are done, I wash my hair in the white enamel sink. The red and white kitchen is mother-daughter fun.

***

I am a mother

I pretend I'm still asleep. I hear the commotion drifting upstairs from the kitchen, and I smile. It is Mother's Day, and they will be bounding up the stairs. Peter will carry the tray, and they will jump on the bed, eager to share their sweet gifts of little things and a card made at school. They are all smiles. I don't need this fuss. I love being their mom, and I know their love, but they need to show their thoughtfulness, and Mother's Day is a family tradition shared around the world. Children love and understand the value of these little celebrations that give them the yearly opportunity to demonstrably express family love.

It reminds me of the day I became a mom for the first time. It was a hot and sunny day in May. She was due ten days before, and in my naivety, I thought she would arrive then. I was supposed to be a mom by then. Those ten days of waiting were giving way to fears that it wasn't going to happen. The ten days reminded me of the miscarriage the year before. I had cried and thought I would never get pregnant again, but here I was, and I was nervous, not of being a mom; I was so ready and so in love with my unborn child. I was worried something would go wrong. I recalled the words of author and speaker Leo Buscaglia. "Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow; it only saps today of its joy."

And all is well; our daughter is perfect. She jumped into the world feet first and into our hearts forever. I remember the drive home from the hospital in our little car to our new home in Milton. There is a surprise. Our house got grass while we got a baby. We were the first house on our street to get grass, and I can still see it; that new grass, in our new and first home, and the start of a whole new life as parents. Each child is a gift, and it's a busy life with four of them in six and a half years. I am in my element, and happiness overflows. The worry times don't go away, but I remember Buscaglia's words and will not let them rob me of the joys. There are so many memories of their childhood years. Maybe I should write a few stories about them.

***

I am a grandmother

You know it will be wonderful, but you don't really get it until it happens. I am Gramma, and there is no other feeling quite like it. I hold that first grandchild in my arms, and I am in awe and in love. I have nine grandchildren, and with each one, these feelings are repeated and grow.

Mother's Day becomes more thoughtful. We will connect, but the connections take different forms and vary from year to year. There will be a visit from one child and her family. One or two more will wait to visit on the upcoming May long weekend. Another will set up FaceTime. Nevertheless, Mother's Day remains a day to pause and be reminded of family love.

***

And one more thing … I chuckled at the internet posts I found about Mother's Day. One was titled "10 Best Mother's Day Gifts for Elderly Moms in 2026". My kids don't need the internet to tell them what their senior side mom likes, and it's not about gifts. Just strikes me as funny, but I guess it is also a little sad.

I hope you have a lovely Mother's Day, with or without one of the 10 best gifts for elderly moms. Happy Mother's Day.

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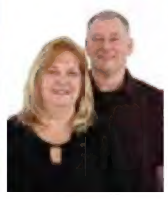

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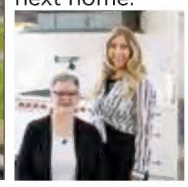

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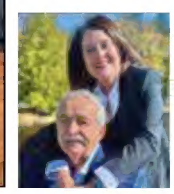

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Nature in your backyard

County Life welcomes photo submissions depicting life in the Highlands. Email emily@ haliburtonpress.com. Please ensure images are high resolution - 200 dpi, 10 inches at its longest edge.

Dahl by Linda Tatler

Cute Fisher by Tammy Nash

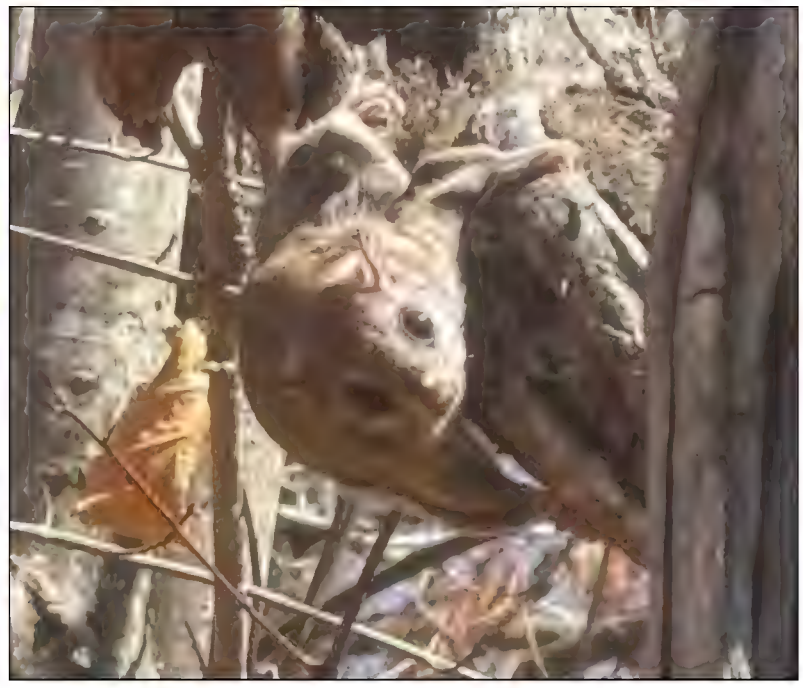
Beaver by Tammy Nash

Busy feeder by Randy Barber

Sparrow by Jill Moulton

Chickadee by Jill Moulton

Bear by Natalie McBain



Flying squirrel by Carolyn Humphreys

Loon spreading its wings by Jill Moulton

Goldfinch by Randy Barber

Local Service Directory

In honour of National Library Month, the local Friends of the Library are conducting a series of interviews showcasing individuals in the community and their relationship to libraries. To our surprise, the Friends asked if they could interview County Life editor, Emily Stonehouse. As a life-long reader and user of libraries, Emily agreed. Below is the story, written by Janet Trull, on the importance of libraries.

Once upon a library

JANET TRULL
Special to County Life

Libraries have been around for thousands of years. Collections of clay slab documents in south-west Asia date back to 7000 B.C. We can assume they weren't for public lending. The library as we know it was not established until the 1800s, when the idea of public education was catching on as a way to elevate the masses out of ignorance and poverty.

The first Ontario libraries opened in Toronto and Guelph in 1883 when the Free Libraries Act was passed. It allowed municipalities to set up libraries funded by taxes. Haliburton's library services started in the municipal offices and were run mostly by volunteers until, in 1965, small branches throughout the county amalgamated and became the essential service it is today.

I met Emily Stonehouse at the Dysart Branch recently to have a conversation about the role libraries have played in her life. Emily's parents, keen readers themselves, got her into the library habit at a young age. She remembers sitting in the small library on Mountain Street on a rainy afternoon, getting lost in the world of *Stuart Little* by E. B. White.

In Grade 3, Emily walked into the beautiful brand-new Stuart Baker School library where her teacher, Jim Hopkins, shared all that he knew about the magic in a good story. School librarians Leora Carter and Michelle Shapiera at J.D.H. and Hal High kept the literacy energy flowing. Their enthusiasm for exploring genres and challenging subject matter was supported by teachers like Darryl Dobson and Kerry Riley.

Emily sought out libraries as a university student. In Ottawa, she discovered the impressive Parliament library. Her favourite library in Halifax was housed in an old wartime hospital near the docks. Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland, had a library well-stocked in Canadiana books. The welcoming feeling of walking into a library connects book lovers across the country and throughout the world.

see page 13

Local Service Directory

from page 12

Now, as a mother of a two-year-old, Emily is delighted to snuggle up with picture books once again. *Red is Best* by Kathy Stinson, and *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown, are his favourites. Of course, with a middle name based on one of Emily's favourite books, he is destined to love the classics.

Emily couldn't have predicted that her love of literacy would turn into a career, but her job as editor of three community publications seems like a natural fit. The *Haliburton County Echo* and the *Minden Times* started in 1884 as the *Minden Echo*. The newspapers are anomalies in a world where independent presses have been replaced by big media organizations. Along with *County Life*, the newspapers reflect Emily's dedication to local interest stories, reporting with integrity, and ideas that reflect our unique community. She credits her parents, teachers, and of course librarians, for teaching her the power of the printed word in a changing world.

Haliburton County libraries have adapted well to a fast-changing literacy landscape with free access to the internet, databases, and educational programs. Computers are available for equitable access to online education, employment, and social services.

Unchanged, is the welcome you receive when you walk in the door of your local library. It remains an inclusive hub for every member of the community. How can you support this essential service?

You can love your library by visiting often. Use that library card or pick up a new one. Check out the latest books, films, tech devices, learning kits, and book club book bags. Follow the Haliburton County Public Library on Facebook and Instagram. Sign up online for the newsletter (haliburtonlibrary.ca) so you stay current with programs and special events. Check out the Book Nook (used books looking for new homes). Become a Friend!

For $5, you can buy a "Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library" membership. Join at your nearest branch. Your contribution helps fund programs, resources and new materials. At its heart, our local library is a place to cherish and support. See you there.

HALIBURTON COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Community Events

Send your event listing to classifieds@haliburtonpress.com

The Minden Health Care Auxiliary "End of Season" Sale
When: Two Fridays May 8 and 15 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Where: In the Gift Shop located just outside the Long Term Care Home 6 McPherson St. Minden
Sale will include clothes, purses, jewellery and more! Come on in, pick up a bargain and check out our new Spring Collection.

Spring Wildflowers and Leeks Land Trust Discovery Days
When: Saturday May 9, 10 a.m. to noon
Where: Barnum Creek Nature Reserve
Join avid naturalist Michele Swyer to wander trails at Barnum Creek Nature Reserve in search of beautiful spring wildflowers and wild leeks. Learn about these delicate early spring ephemerals and how to sustainably harvest wild leeks. Note that wild leeks may not be harvested at Barnum Creek Nature Reserve or any other Land Trust property. Pre-registration required at www.haliburtonlandtrust.ca. Admission by donation. Partially funded by TD Friends of the Environment Foundation. Admission by donation. Leader: Michele Swyer

Maintaining Body and Mind as We Age
When: Monday, May 11, 7 to 9 p.m.
Where: Remembrance Hall, Haliburton Legion, 719 Mountain St, Haliburton
Dr. Norm Bottum, well-known Haliburton family doctor, will present information of evolving interest about physical and cognitive well-being so that we can learn how to "square our health curve" by maintaining good health and independence for as long as possible. Lve music by two other well-known Haliburtonians: Northern Wildflowers – Sue Shikaze and Myrna McBrien. Open to all, free admission and light refreshments provided, hosted by the Baha'i community of Haliburton. For further information, call Pat at 416-606-9657.

"The Bee Project - Native Bees"
When: May 12, 7 p.m.
Where: Minden Community Centre, 55 Parkside
Join the Minden & District Horticultural Society to learn about "The Bee Project – Native Bees" from guest speaker Cheryl Fraser, followed by the monthly society meeting. New members welcome!

Don Smith Memorial Bird Walk Land Trust Discovery Days
When: Saturday, May 16, 7 a.m. (rain date Sunday, May 17)
Where: Haliburton Rail Trail
Join bird experts Ed and Tamara Poropat to discover which birds are returning and can be seen and/or heard along the rail trail. Bring your binoculars or camera. Meet at the rail trail parking area 7286 Gelert Road, opposite high school playing field. Dress for the weather and possibly for bugs. Pre-registration required at www.haliburtonlandtrust.ca. Contact 705-457-3700. Partially funded by TD Friends of the Environment Foundation. Leader: Ed and Tamara Poropat. Admission by donation

Minden & District Horticultural Society Annual Plant Sale
When: May 16, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Where: 63 Bobcaygeon Rd., Minden
Rain or Shine

Local Service Directory

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Moving Sale. **May 16th and 17th. 9am to 3pm.** 1200 Ritchie Falls Rd. Yard art, tools, some furniture from the house, lawn and outdoor tools, and miscellaneous items. Rain or Shine.

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CANOE 100.9 & 97.1 FM

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Join Haliburton County's community radio station and gain hands-on experience in media, marketing, and event planning. You'll help with our Radiothon, create social media content, connect with local businesses, and be out in the community building relationships.

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HALIBURTON COUNTY

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School projects may face further delay

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

A new kink has been added to the Haliburton County Board of Education's construction plans, perhaps delaying its school building projects even further.

The board has found out it will have to go through an additional step to seek approval to upgrade the high school and build a new elementary school.

Because the two projects are far more expensive than the allocation levels originally approved by the province, the board knew it would have to get the green light to build from the provincial Education Improvement Commission (EIC).

But administrators have now learned the plans first need to be approved by the local committee that has been set up to oversee the amalgamation of the boards in Haliburton, Muskoka and Victoria Counties.

The new twist could end up turning the clock back on the board's already slowed construction timetable.

Under guidelines set by the EIC, all trustees on the local transition committee have to reach agreement on Haliburton's building plans before they can be approved.

The committee, chaired by Haliburton chairwoman Cheryl Murdoch, includes three trustees from each board, plus their directors. One native trustee from the Muskoka board may also be added to the committee. (The board directors don't hold the power vote).

See CONSTRUCTION page 4

Waterlogged

Umbrellas and foul-weather gear were standard operating equipment for Saturday's unique log auction in Stanhope. Many braved the steady downpour in search of unusual logs and great bargains. At right, Paul Hébert keeps dry beneath his umbrella as the auctioneer takes bids. Above, René Butikofer checks out a yellow birch before the the bidding started. The second annual log auction was organized by the Haliburton Stewardship Council. More photos on page 18.

On the hustings:

The candidates are off and running in bid to sway local voters in federal election

by MARIA CALABRESE
Staff Reporter

Black flies aren't the only things that will be descending on us this spring now that campaigning for the June 2 federal election is under way.

While other parties are promising tax cuts to cash strapped Canadians, Liberal incumbent John O'Reilly is reminding voters that the country will not be borrowing any new money by the end of next year, and that only when the elimination of the deficit is imminent will the government be able to increase social programs and cut taxes.

These are the issues at the forefront of the Liberal election campaign:

On Bill C-68: A poll in the Victoria-Haliburton riding showed 49.6 % in favour of gun control and 49.4 % against. While O'Reilly said he takes responsibility for not voting on a bill that he knew the riding was going to lose anyway, he says this is not a single-issue election and that he should be judged on overall performance.

On jobs: The Liberals brought 238 infrastructure grants into the Victoria-Haliburton riding.

On amalgamation in Haliburton County: There are currently 10 municipal offices that serve 14,000 people and the county needs to streamline the way it administers services. "If they don't do it the provincial government is going to do it for them," O'Reilly said.

Reducing government spending will free up money that can be used to maintain roads and other services which are integral to maintaining the area's strong tourism base.

On services: Communication systems must be improved to make it easier to get a designated line for fax machines and computers and encourage small business and home offices in the area. O'Reilly will continue his campaign to embarrass big business by pointing out to big-city customers that they can't use the services they've paid for in rural areas.

Country-wide closures of hospitals, and the province-wide spending cuts to schools as well as the amalgamation of school boards have put education and health care at the forefront of Canadian concerns. And these issues make up the foundation of the Progressive Conservative platform during this election.

PC candidate Lorne Chester says his party would establish the Canadian Educational Excellence Fund which would provide matching funds for provinces and territories, as well as set the standards to form a common curricula to be followed by all schools.

A National Testing Institute, in co-operation with the provinces and territories, would test Grades 3, 8 and 12 students across the country to monitor the progress of school programs.

Chester said the country could free up money for not only these education initiatives, but for health services by increasing transfer payments to the provinces and reducing govern-

See PARTIES page 6

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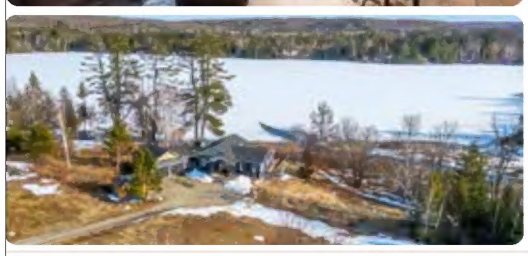

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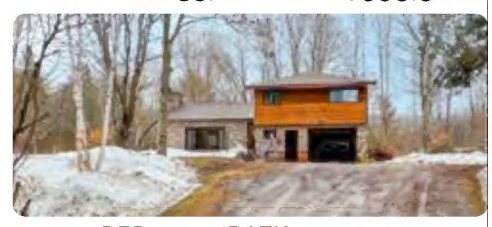

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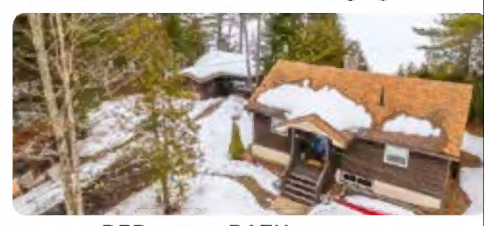

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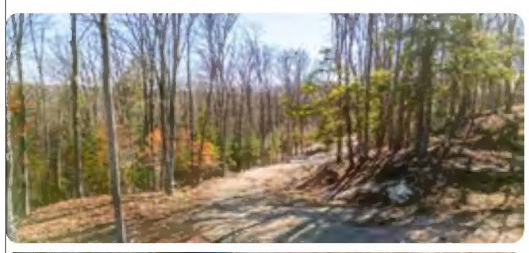

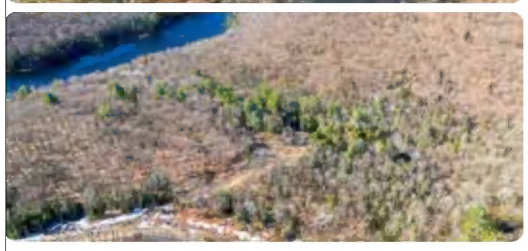

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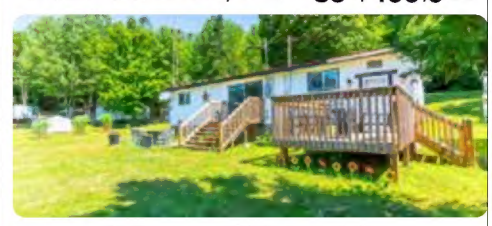

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Linda and her team provided excellent pricing, sales, and marketing advice. They did their research as to the current market and helped us arrive at an aspirational but realistic price. Their assistance in presenting the property was fabulous and we sold within a week of posting

-R. Blickstead, Google Review

A big thank you goes to Linda Baumgartner and her team for their expert advice and service. Linda was a pleasure to work with and was professional and knowledgeable in handling the sale of our cottage. We can fully endorse Linda Baumgartner and her team for their integrity, honesty and commitment to our sale.

-S. Webb, Google Review

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